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World pg 7

Clinton helps release journalists in North Korea

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Celebrity Buzz

Butler awaits Aniston kiss

pg 20

Government hybrid rebates failing: Study

UBC Government rebates that aim to get people out of their gas-guzzling SUVs and into fuel-efficient hybrids are failing according to a study by the University of B.C.

It found that the majority of people who bought hybrids would have bought them anyway, regardless of the rebates, said Ambarish Chandra, a professor at UBC's Sauder School of Business.

The study also found that consumers influenced by rebates bought hybrids instead of fuel-efficient cars.

METRO VANCOUVER

Guzzlers

- The sale of large gas guzzlers rose steadily since the introduction of government rebates for hybrids.

Conservation Expedition **Flathead RAVE**

PHOTO CREDITS: TREES/ANDY WRIGHT. GOAT/JOE RIIS. BEAR/JOE RIIS. AERIAL/GARTH LENZ

An international team of photographers spent 10 days in B.C.'s Flathead River Valley creating a library of images to help draw attention to the industrial threats facing the area. Clockwise, from top right: A stand of trees; a mountain goat at the Grizzly Wide Pass; an aerial view of the valley; a grizzly bear at the Glacier National Park in Montana, part of the Flathead ecosystem. **Column, page 4.**

New Zealand, Australia send firefighters

WILDFIRES Thirty fire specialists from Australia and New Zealand are on their way to B.C. to help fight some of the roughly 700 wildfires raging here, including one that's threatening Lillooet.

Thousands of British Columbians are living in hotels, schools, churches or with friends as fires, fuelled by high temperatures and winds, burn through the province's tinder-dry forests.

Pat Bell, minister of Forests and Range, said the fight to contain the wildfires has stretched the province's fire resources to their limits.

At Mount McLean, fire crews are scrambling to contain a 3,300-hectare forest fire that's one kilometre away from Lillooet.

Fire information officer Jeremiah Louis said the Mount McLean fire was "zero per cent contained."

"They're still working on containment lines with heavy machinery and they have helicopters doing bucket support on any terrain that's too steep for ground crews."

KRISTEN THOMPSON/ METRO VANCOUVER

Lillooet

- Many of the 2,500 Lillooet evacuees are staying in dorms at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops.
- Another 100 residents have refused to leave their homes.

Canada Line to open early

Free rides set for Aug. 17 launch of $2B rapid transit to YVR

The Canada Line linking Vancouver to Richmond is opening three months ahead of schedule on Aug. 17.

The ride will be free on opening day, as trains will run between 1 and 9 p.m. to give commuters a chance to explore the 19-kilometre line that cost just more than $2 billion to build.

With large crowds expected that day, TransLink is saying that bikes and pets will not be allowed on the new SkyTrain cars until the following day when it opens for regular service.

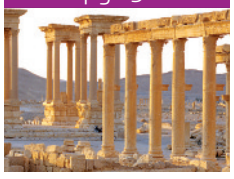
Starting Aug. 18, the first northbound train will leave Richmond-Brighouse station in the mornings at 5:05 a.m., while the first southbound train will depart Waterfront Station at 4:50 a.m. Standard TransLink fares will apply at first, but starting in 2010 commuters going to any of the three stations on Sea Island, including YVR-Airport, will pay an additional $2.50. The completion of the line makes Vancouver the first Canadian city to have a rapid transit line connecting downtown and the airport. The trip is supposed to take 25 minutes.

METRO VANCOUVER

19-km trip

- The new Canada Line trains will have the capacity to hold 400 commuters.
- The trains will run every three minutes during peak service.

Travel pg 15



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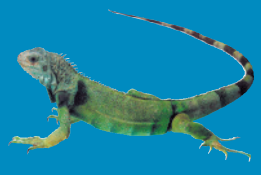
Guess Who's coming to town?
Roger Daltrey, frontman of the English rock band the Who, is kicking off his solo tour with a show in Vancouver. He performs at the Commodore Ballroom on Oct. 10. METRO VANCOUVER

Local



Firefighters catch leaping lizard

Firefighters in Victoria were called to a West Shore home to catch an "a large lizard" that had leapt from the roof of its home to a nearby tree, while its owners were on holiday. A neighbour called police to report the animal had escaped. The iguana is in the custody of animal control until its owners return. METRO VANCOUVER

Olympics **PM visits Richmond Oval**

JEFF HODSON/METRO VANCOUVER

Premier Gordon Campbell, left, and Prime Minister Stephen Harper meet Vancouver 2010 mascot Quatchi at the Richmond Olympic Oval yesterday. The prime minister chatted and posed for pictures with members of Canada's long-track speed skating team.

Woman found slain

Suspect in custody after homicide in Kitsilano

A woman was murdered yesterday inside a Kitsilano apartment.

Vancouver police were called to 2345 West Fifth Ave. at about 12:40 p.m. Patrol officers discovered a deceased woman inside a first-floor suite.

Vancouver Const. Anne Longley said a suspect was arrested inside the building and taken to hospital.

"He didn't appear to be well," said Longley, outside the green-and-brick three-storey building. "He remains in the hospital at this time."

Yesterday afternoon the alley behind the apartment was cordoned with yellow police tape and two police cruisers. The woman's body remained in the suite, Longley said, as police awaited a search warrant and the arrival of the coroner.

Longley would not say what was wrong with the man.

Police were not releasing the woman's identity and Longley said the suspect's relationship with her is undetermined.

JEFF HODSON/ METRO VANCOUVER

Thousands needed for 2010 security

KARL YU
for Metro Vancouver

HIRING The security firm contracted by VANOC to conduct security screening-related positions is hiring 5,000 people to work full-time during the 2010 Olympics.

Prospective screeners, X-ray and communication operators, supervisors and managers can apply, get information, interview and even receive a conditional job offer on the spot, all at the newly opened hiring centre on Terminal Avenue.

Derek Gagne, workforce division manager at Contemporary Security Canada, said the positions include paid training, benefits and wages that range from $16-$30 with a $2.50 per hour job completion bonus that will be handed out at the end.

Vancouver man presumed dead after vanishing in river

SQUAMISH RIVER A 20-year-old Vancouver man is presumed dead after going missing in the Squamish River on Sunday afternoon.

Mounties said yesterday that the man was riding in the river with his brother when they decided to jump in.

One brother was able to grab hold of a tree and was rescued; however, the other brother never resurfaced.

Squamish rescue crews searched the area using a boat and a helicopter but were unable to find the missing man. Strong river currents complicated their efforts.

The search was eventually called off.

The man's name has not been released.

METRO VANCOUVER

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What's online today.

Video Officials say the next 48 hours will be crucial as wildfires threaten B.C. communities at **metronews.ca/canada**

Video Toronto residents rejoice as garbage collectors return to work after a long strike at **metronews.ca/canada**

Watch the MetroTube of the Day — the video you need to see

Check movie showtimes, watch trailers and read reviews

Canucks GM given role of president

KARL YU
for Metro Vancouver

Vancouver Canucks GM Mike Gillis was named president of Canucks Sports and Entertainment yesterday, taking over for Chris Zimmerman.

Together with chief operating officer Victor de Bonis, Gillis will also be responsible for areas such as broadcasting, marketing, sponsorship and ticket sales.

The team also said that Seattle Seahawks CEO and former Canucks senior executive Tod Leiweke would join the Canucks as a special adviser.

"Most of my responsibilities will remain with hockey operations and I see this as a more of a transitional role between the business side of the company and the hockey operations side of the company," Gillis said during a conference call.

"I don't see this detracting (from) my priority, which is hockey operations."

News in brief

PNE The Gipsy Kings are the final band of the 2009 Fair in the PNE Summer Nights Concerts. Entrance to the performance are included in the admission.

GAMES Nearly 300 competitors from 14 countries taking part in the World Police and Fire Games are racing up the Grouse Grind starting at 9 a.m. today.

CRASH The name of the pilot who died in the crash of a home-built plane on Sunday evening has been released by the RCMP. Surrey resident Donald William Souter, 52, crashed his single-engine aircraft in Courtenay.

METRO VANCOUVER

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Team China victorious at fireworks show

Team China was crowned winner of this year's HSBC Celebration of Light fireworks show. Red Eagle Industrial & Trade, which represented China, beat Canada, South Africa and the United Kingdom for the first-place award. The U.K. won the People's Choice Award. METRO VANCOUVER

Skeena swimmer reaches halfway point of journey

CRUSADE A Hazelton woman who is trying to swim the length of British Columbia's second-longest river has reached the halfway point after swimming into her hometown.

Ali Howard, 33, a luxury lodge chef, is swimming the Skeena River to raise awareness of potentially harmful industrial development projects in Northern B.C.

Her arrival in Hazelton on Monday marked Day 14 of her 28-day, 610-kilometre swim, which is set to end in Prince Rupert on Aug. 15.

Howard spends nine hours a day in the water and is supported by crew in two kayaks and two rafts.

METRO VANCOUVER

News in brief

DROWNING A 19-year-old Abbotsford man died in hospital after drowning at Cultus Lake early Sunday morning, Chilliwack RCMP report. Investigators believe the victim swam out to retrieve a ball when he got tired and went under.

TICKETS Music fans planning on buying tickets to upcoming shows at the Commodore Ballroom can save some cash if they buy the passes today. Tickets are half price on Wednesdays, and starting today, Live Nation is also offering them with no service fees.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Flathead's beauty draws RAVEs

Remote valley treasured by photographers deserves provincial protection

Kai Chan and Carrie West

News **Analysis**

International photographers just held a RAVE in B.C.'s threatened Flathead River Valley — and no, it was not a midnight '90s trance dance with neon necklaces.

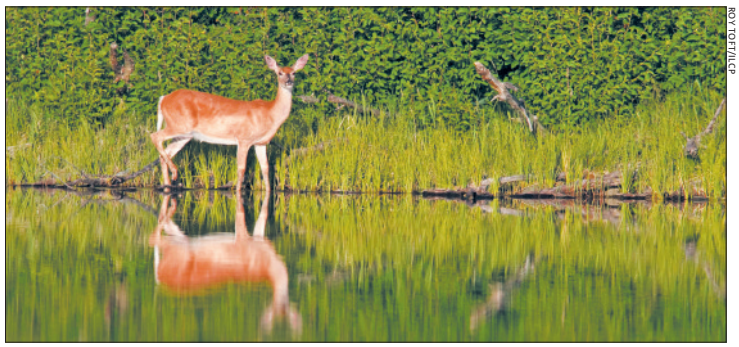
These award-winning professionals held a Rapid Assessment Visual Expedition. They fanned out over the Flathead for 10 days to create a visual portrait of this majestic remote valley.

The point was to show the beauty of this living landscape. Their stunning pictures make the industrial threats to this wonderland all the more heartbreaking. If mining companies planned to do to your backyard what they plan to do to the Flathead, you'd likely be irate. And your backyard probably doesn't have the natural beauty or wildlife and ecosystem values of the valley.

So this hardy group of concerned photographers are challenging us to think of the Flathead Valley — a conservation hotspot with an impressive mix of wildflowers — as our backyard. They braved the densest population of interior grizzly bears on the continent to create a library of images for conservation. Kudos to this International League of Conservation Photographers for choosing B.C.'s Flathead as their first Canadian RAVE and donating these powerful images to such a worthy cause.

The Flathead is right beside the world's first Peace Park (Waterton-Glacier International). Alberta and Montana have done their share to protect this amazing ecosystem, but B.C. is lagging badly — the environmental threats to the Peace Park from B.C. just led UNESCO to instigate a fact-finding mission.

It's time to protect the remarkable Flathead Valley in B.C.'s backyard, which lures these National Geographic-calibre photographers. So gaze at the picture on this page, get to know the Flathead Valley and give yourself a chance to fall in love.



ROY TOFT/JLCP

A deer in the Flathead River Valley.

More on Flathead

- B.C.'s Flathead Valley is adjacent to Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park — a World Heritage Site and United Nations Biosphere Reserve.
- Conservationists have been trying to protect the valley for three decades.
- Add your voice at friendsoftheflathead.ca.

Kai Chan is an assistant professor and Canada Research Chair at the Institute for Resources, Environment, and Sustainability (IRES) at UBC; Carrie West is the communications co-ordinator for the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, B.C. Chapter.

Young Vancouver thespian relishes career as educational alternative

PROFILE Twelve-year-old Vancouver actor Alex Ferris misses a lot of school to be on set, but says it's just a matter of substituting the conventional classroom for a non-traditional alternative.

Ferris said his seasoned co-stars — including Jon Voight, Billy Crystal, Robin Williams and Jeff Daniels — have become his teachers when he isn't in school.

"Robin Williams gave me a leather-bound book with his signature inside," said Ferris, whose latest film, The Time Traveler's Wife starring Eric Bana and Rachel McAdams, will be in theatres on Aug. 14.

"It's tough to be nervous after you've met them because they're really nice. They like to give me tips about (acting) and life. I've been told to stay in school and have a normal childhood."

His film credits include X-Men: The Last Stand and the yet-to-be-released Battlestar Galactica movie, as well as locally filmed TV shows Smallville and The L Word.

He said he loves being able to become a new person through his characters and "have an adventure that a normal student wouldn't.

"Like waking up at two in the morning and driving to Burnaby and working. It makes life really unpredictable." KRISTEN THOMPSON/ METRO VANCOUVER

PHOTO SUBMITTED

Alex Ferris, left, and Eric Bana on the set of The Time Traveler's Wife.

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PM to announce Panama free-trade deal
Prime Minister Stephen Harper is expected to announce a free-trade deal with Panama next week when he meets with the right-wing supermarket magnate who won the presidency of the Central American country three months ago. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Canada

Human foot found in trash

A foot found in an upstate New York garbage dump Monday night is at the centre of a Toronto investigation after suggestions that it might have originated from this city's trash. Workers at the Seneca, N.Y. garbage dump just outside Buffalo discovered the foot around 8:50 p.m. Monday while manually removing recyclables from a conveyor belt that displayed the Toronto trash, Toronto police Staff Sgt. David Vickers said. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Curb aid to Ethiopia, says lawyer

POLITICS Canada's government should consider curbing foreign aid to Ethiopia to express its unhappiness over the case of a Canadian jailed for life in the African country, a lawyer for the man said yesterday.

An Ethiopian court jailed Bashir Makhtal on Monday after he was convicted of membership in a rebel group fighting for independence for an ethnically Somali part of the country.

Lorne Waldman, Makhtal's Canadian lawyer, said the charges were baseless and he called on Ottawa to look at its aid to Ethiopia. In 2006-07, the latest period for which figures were available, the assistance totalled $83 million.

"We have a lot of leverage because we provide a very generous aid package to Ethiopia," Waldman told the CBC.

Makhtal's relatives in Canada also called on Ottawa to freeze foreign aid. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Premiers take aim at 'Buy America'

Leaders gather to help PM repel U.S. protectionism

Canada's provincial and territorial leaders gather today in Regina amid urgent calls for them to help Prime Minister Stephen Harper repel U.S. protectionist "Buy America" trade policies.

Harper, who meets with U.S. President Barack Obama on Sunday, is banking on the premiers formally coming out against domestic discriminatory trading practices.

Harper hopes any premiers' accord can be used as leverage by Obama to convince protectionists in the U.S. Congress to give Canadian firms an exemption from the Buy America provisions being applied by state and local governments.

Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall, who is hosting the three-day meeting, said in an interview yesterday he believes some sort of an agreement can be reached.

"I sense a great deal of consensus obviously amongst the provinces to say, 'Look, if we're going to be going down and pointing out the problems with the Buy America plan we do have to make sure our own house in order,'" said Wall.

"If we want the U.S to open their doors to us then we have to be prepared to open our doors to them."
Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty

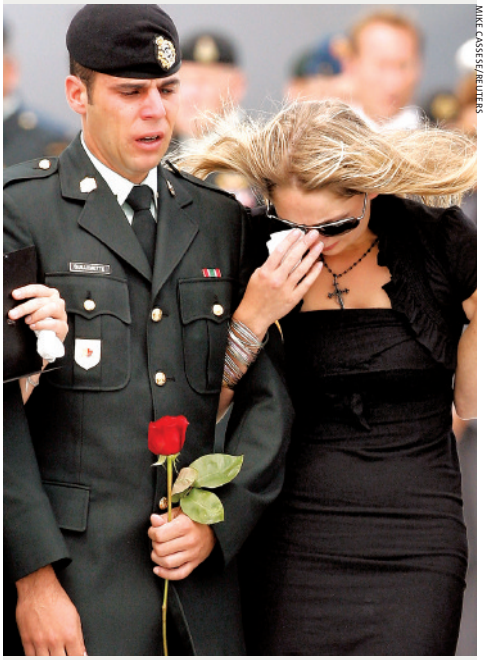
"After all of these years of seeing what has happened with free trade agreements, first with the U.S. and then with NAFTA, seeing the growth in trade from our country to other places and the jobs that have been created because of it and not seeing any of the predicted calamities ... we know we're always better off in free trade environments," he said.

Speaking to reporters in Mississauga before flying to Regina last night, Premier Dalton McGuinty said the premiers want "to enable the federal government to make a proposal to negotiate a new agreement that is specific to the stimulus monies coming out of Washington these days.

"It's not an easy thing to do, because it means that we have to make some difficult decisions ourselves, to be free traders in the context of an era of globalization," said McGuinty.

"But if we want the U.S. to open their doors to us then we have to be prepared to open our doors to them," he said at a news conference announcing the province is investing $16.7 million in Electrovaya, which makes batteries for electric cars. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

CFB Trenton **Mourning heroes**



MIKE CASSESE/REUTERS

Mourners carry roses to the casket of fallen Canadian soldier Corp. Christian Bobbitt during a repatriation ceremony at Canadian Forces Base Trenton, yesterday. Bobbitt was killed on Saturday in Afghanistan.

News in brief

VIDEO A YouTube video showing a seven-year-old boy at the wheel of a sport utility vehicle — with his family cheering him on — has prompted an investigation by Quebec police and family services, police said yesterday. The video was apparently shot by the boy's father from the SUV's passenger seat as the boy drives and his mom and siblings watch from the backseat. Finding the family wasn't a challenge, given the father's enthusiastic narration of the video, including their location in Quebec and the boy's first name. REUTERS

FOOD Canada's largest meat processing firm said it was following new federal food safety protocol when it voluntarily recalled thousands of hot dogs yesterday — three weeks after the plant that produced them tested positive for listeria. The recall, which involves nine brands of hot dogs sold under the names Maple Leaf, Shopsy's and Hygrade, is just a precaution, Maple Leaf emphasized. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Comment

Ode to the 'Father of Medicare'

TheWestView

As Barack Obama tries to bring universal health care to the U.S.A. and the "Brooks Brothers Brigade" tries to everything in its power to stop him, let's take a quiet moment and give thanks to ____ (fill in the deity of your choice) for medicare.

More than back bacon and our legendary tendency to go "eh?" it's what makes us Canadian.

In fact, we should erect a statue to Tommy Douglas, the Father of Medicare, right on the lawn of Parliament Hill. I'm sure we can warehouse a couple statues of Queen Victoria to make space.

I suspect that many of you reading this today born in the 1970s, '80s or '90s have no idea who Tommy Douglas was. A little background: He was the premier of Saskatchewan who fought off the fiercely focused efforts of the medical lobby and a doctor's strike to get universal health care adopted in Saskatchewan, back in 1962. Four years later, Ottawa, under Lester Pearson (another statue, please), followed suit.

And now, when you're sick, you can get health care without being ruined, even if you have a "prior condition," unlike 47 million Americans. It's why we're so careful when we go shopping for cheese across the border. We might break a leg and won't be able to crawl back to health care and safety.

I know, I know. There's a lot wrong with the system as currently constituted. The Fraser Institute (our own version of the Brooks Brothers Brigade) estimates health care will consume 100 per cent of provincial revenues by the year 2050 (it takes up more than half now), and the average wait time for surgery and other medical procedures is 17 weeks. The good news: That's down from 18 weeks in 2007.

And we all have stories of being stacked up in a hospital corridor or getting treated in a broom closet while waiting for a bed. Inevitably, we're looking at a two-tier system where those who can will pay for preferential treatment, while the rest of us limp into the lineup.

Implementing a version of that two-tier system in America will cost $1 trillion. But it's necessary — now more than ever as increased unemployment brings increased loss of benefits.

It's funny. I remember Tommy Douglas as a little man with thick glasses and an annoying, adenoidal speaking style that would cause me to change channels if there was more than one, which, in 1962, there wasn't. But without that adenoidal little man, we'd all be up Meech Lake without a paddle.

Cue the statue.

Paul Sullivan is a Vancouver-based journalist and owner of Sullivan Media Consulting; vancouverletters@metronews.ca.

Word on the street: There have been conflicting opinions about whether or not the recession is over. Do you think we're on the road to recovery?

Rachel Hay
age 22, Yaletown

A: I do think we're on the road to recovery. A lot of companies are starting to hire again and it's looking more promising.

Bernabe Santos
age 39, Yaletown

A: We process shipments everyday and we noticed that shipments are improving and it's been improving for the past month.

Kate Tickner
age 25, Coquitlam

A: I think we're on the road to recovery. It's probably going to take a while because there are still additional mortgage things that are going to come down.

Brian Ball
age 23, Calgary

A: No. I heard about the deficit change in Alberta from $4 billion to $7 billion. That doesn't sound like we are on the road to recovery.

Andrea Ewer
age 22, Halifax

A: I haven't noticed any difference in my own personal life — I haven't noticed any up or down.

Jesse Brady
age 32, Ottawa

A: I think that while the stock market may be showing some increased gains, jobs are still continuing to be lost ... I don't think we're going to recover anytime soon.

MICHAEL DE ADDER

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'Sexting' on the rise in Britain
A growing number of British teens are swapping explicit images of themselves on mobile phones, leaving them open to bullying and victimization, police and a charity said. REUTERS

World

Clinton secures release

North Korea said last night it had pardoned two jailed American journalists after former U.S. President Bill Clinton met the reclusive state's leader Kim Jong-il, a move some analysts said could pave the way to direct nuclear disarmament talks.

Clinton's spokesman said the former president had left Pyongyang with the two reporters and they were flying to Los Angeles.

Washington, which is keen not to be seen to reward the isolated North for its recent nuclear and missile tests, insisted the meeting was a private one by Clinton.

But Pyongyang, desperate for the recognition that direct talks with the Obama administration would bring, made clear it saw the visit in a much more official light.

The North's KCNA news agency said Clinton and Kim "had candid and in-depth discussions on the pending issues between the DPRK (North Korea) and the U.S. in a sincere atmosphere."

The two reporters, Euna Lee, 36, and Laura Ling, 32, who work for Current TV, an American TV outlet co-founded by Clinton's vice president, Al Gore, had been sentenced to 12 years hard labour for illegally entering the North and committing "grave crimes."

"The families of Laura Ling and Euna Lee are overjoyed by the news of their pardon," said a statement posted on a website created to support the two journalists.

Clinton, husband of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, was the highest-level American to visit the reclusive communist state since his secretary of state, Madeleine Albright, went there in 2000. REUTERS

Advance decision

- The North Korean government had agreed in advance that the two jailed American journalists would be released to former president Bill Clinton, a senior administration official said yesterday.

News in brief

TERROR Australian police arrested four men they said were linked to a Somali militant group yesterday, accusing them of planning a suicide attack on an army base and raising fears the al-Qaida-linked rebels were seeking targets outside Africa. The four were seized in dawn raids on 19 properties across Melbourne following a seven-month investigation involving several forces and Australia's national security agency.

FOOD India has asked UNICEF to stop distributing millions of dollars worth of nutrition aid to children, saying it had been done without permission and at the expense of local food to fight hunger. The Ministry for Women and Child Development said UNICEF had not informed the government about importing $2.4 million worth of food in 2008 and said the money could have been spent elsewhere. REUTERS

Happy Birthday Mr. President

JASON REED/REUTERS

Climate change activists wear party hats alongside a giant mask featuring U.S. President Barack Obama on the occasion of his 48th birthday yesterday in Washington. The protesters "celebrated" by symbolically presenting a giant plane ticket for him to attend the UN climate change conference in Denmark.

Sudanese police officers break up pants protest

TRIAL Police used teargas to disperse protesters rallying in support of a Sudanese woman facing 40 lashes for wearing trousers in public yesterday, a case that has become a public test of Sudan's indecency laws.

Lubna Hussein, a former journalist and UN press officer, was arrested with 12 other women during a party at a Khartoum restaurant in July and charged with being indecently dressed.

Women's groups have complained the law gives no clear definition of indecent dress, leaving the decision of whether to arrest a woman up to individual police officers.

Dozens of men and women gathered outside a Khartoum court room where Hussein appeared yesterday, carrying banners with the message "No return to the dark ages" and "Lubna's case is a case for all Sudanese women." REUTERS

Four killed in gym shooting

PENNSYLVANIA A man walked into a suburban Pittsburgh gym Tuesday evening and opened fire in a Latin dance class, killing three women before turning his weapon on himself and taking his own life, police said. Police told reporters outside the L.A. Fitness Center 10 miles south of Pittsburgh, that the gunman entered the gym and opened fire in a rampage that left at least 10 people wounded. Early reports said there were five dead. REUTERS

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PepsiCo deals welcome windfall for investors
PepsiCo Inc. won over its two largest bottlers by raising its takeover offers more than 20 per cent to $7.8 billion, giving investors a welcomed, but not unexpected windfall. REUTERS

Business

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Ford tops July auto sales list

Ford has stunned the Canadian auto industry again by selling the most vehicles for the second consecutive month.

Showing that its run to the top of the market in June for the first time in 60 years was no fluke, Ford reported yesterday sales shot up a startling 47 per cent in July from the same month a year earlier.

Hyundai, whose sales soared 37 per cent, joined Ford among the few posting big gains in July as the overall market dropped 6.4 per cent or almost 10,000 vehicles to 139,901.

It marked the ninth consecutive month that auto sales have dropped in Canada during the recession despite continuing incentives.

Sales for the first seven months of the year are still down 16.6 per cent or more than 171,000 vehicles to almost 861,000.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICES

July sales

Ford Motor Co.: 26,788 units sold — up 47.4 per cent
General Motors: 19,663 units sold — down 41.9 per cent
Toyota: 19,232 units sold — down 12.5 per cent
Chrysler: 15,958 units sold — down 10.4 per cent
Honda: 13,984 units sold — up 12.5 per cent
Hyundai: 10,488 units sold — up 37.8 per cent

India BlackBerry launch

FAYAZ KABLI/REUTERS

Frenny Bawa, left, vice-president of Research In Motion's India operations, and Raghunath Mandava, chief marketing officer of Airtel, hold BlackBerry Curve 8520 smartphones during its launch in New Delhi yesterday.

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Nortel enterprise sale OK'd by U.S., Canadian courts

COMMUNICATIONS Bankrupt Nortel Networks received U.S. and Canadian court approval yesterday to sell its enterprise business, further dismantling the company.

Nortel, based in Toronto, said it reached a "stalking horse" deal to sell the enterprise business, which makes networks for companies, to Avaya Inc. for $475 million US after considering four potential bids. The agreement will set the floor for bidding in an auction, approved by courts in Delaware and Ontario through joint video-linked hearings.

Nortel had resolved 10 objections to the proposed bidding procedures, including those from potential bidders, Nortel's lead U.S. attorney said at yesterday's hearing.

REUTERS

Business in brief

CASINOS Real estate tycoon Donald Trump and an affiliate of Bank of Nevada will buy Trump Entertainment Resorts for $100 million US, the bankrupt casino operator said. Trump, the group's founder and one-time chairman, resigned in February when bondholders demanded a Chapter 11 filing. REUTERS

Ticats take two weekly awards

DeAndra' Cobb, rookie running back of the Hamiltion Tiger-Cats was named the CFL's offensive player of the week yesterday. Hamilton linebacker Jamall Johnson took home the defensive award, Arkee Whitlock of the Edmonton Eskimos was named special-teams player of the week and Saskatchewan Roughriders slotback Chris Getzalf was top Canadian. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports

Zherdev a free agent

Nikolai Zherdev, left, has become an unrestricted free agent after the New York Rangers walked away from the $3.9-million US salary arbitration award to the winger. An arbitrator awarded Zherdev $3.9 million on Sunday, $650,000 more than the $3.25-million qualifying offer tabled by the Rangers. Zherdev, 24, appeared in 82 games with the Rangers last season, recording 23 goals and 35 assists with 39 penalty minutes. THE CANADIAN PRESS

EDITOR: CHRIS.CLEMENTS@METRONEWS.CA

Sports in brief

FORMULA ONE Bernie Ecclestone says Formula One will return to Montreal next season. Ecclestone, the head of the F1 circuit, said in yesterday's edition of Motorsport Aktuell magazine that "we'll be driving in Montreal again in 2010."

OLYMPICS Canada won't bid for the 2018 Winter Olympics, but is considering a bid to host the 2022 Games. The 2018 Games is too soon after next year's Vancouver Olympics for Canada to play host again, says Chris Rudge, the chief executive officer of the Canadian Olympic Committee.

BASEBALL Third baseman Scott Rolen got a CT scan that came back normal, an indication he could be back in the Cincinnati Reds' lineup within a few days. Rolen was beaned on the left side of the head by a pitch from Jason Marquis on Sunday.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Ruling could be calm before the desert storm

The NHL, Jim Balsillie, various bidders, creditors and other interested parties with a stake in the Phoenix Coyotes are today waiting for a ruling from bankruptcy judge Redfield T. Baum, hoping to get some sense of the team's future.

The only sure bet is that, whatever the judge rules, someone is going to be severely ticked off.

Baum is expected to hand down a decision on how the Sept.10 auction of the Coyotes will be conducted, including whether Canadian billionaire Balsillie will be allowed to participate or whether it will be restricted to the two bidders who intend, after reworking the team's arena lease, to keep the team in the Phoenix suburb of Glendale.

Balsillie, of course, wants to move the team to Hamilton and is pursuing his purchase of the team even though he has been unanimously rejected by the NHL's governors as a potential owner.

But don't expect today's ruling to be definitive or for it to end the soap opera-like drama that has surrounded the Coyotes bankruptcy. Even Baum conceded that however the auction unfolds, it will likely be followed by endless litigation.

This case has been steeped in angry rhetoric and finger pointing. Even yesterday, reacting to confidential information leaked on Friday — details of the concessions Jerry Reinsdorf was seeking from Glendale in his bid — Baum yesterday ordered Jerry Moyes, owner of the Coyotes, to show why he should not be held in contempt of court.

Baum ordered Moyes, his wife Vickie and their attorneys to appear at a show-cause hearing today after they allegedly violated the confidentiality order issued by the judge.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Blue Jays Yankees take Doc deep

FRED THORNHILL/REUTERS

Toronto starting pitcher Roy Halladay stands on the mound as New York's Johnny Damon rounds the bases behind him after hitting a home run in the eighth inning last night during the Yankees' 5-3 win over the Blue Jays.

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Beware summer heat inside car

If left inside a vehicle during a hot, summer day, babies can become distressed in just five minutes, and in less than 40 minutes, a child or pet could suffer severe dehydration or heat stroke. SOURCE: B.C. AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION

Metro Drive

Kizashi coming

Suzuki recently debuted the 2010 Kizashi, the company's first entry into the all-wheel drive sport sedan segment. The flagship model arrives in North America this winter.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: KUMAR SAHA, KUMAR.SAHA@METRONEWS.CA

VW Eos: Hello sunshine

Weekend trips made easy with roomy convertible

JIL MCINTOSH
for Metro Canada

2009 Volkswagen Eos

Type: Sports convertible
Price: from $35,975
Engine: 2L four-cylinder turbocharged
HP: 200

Highlights

- Hold four people
- Dual-clutch technology ensures smooth shifting
- Functional interior

Based on the Rabbit platform, the Volkswagen Eos is a convertible for both summer and winter.

There really aren't any bad convertibles on a sunny day, but some are better than others, and the Volkswagen Eos is a very good one.

At a base price of $35,975, it isn't cheap. But it holds four people, and its retractable hardtop (no soft roof is available) means it can comfortably handle winter weather as well.

Based on the Rabbit platform, the Eos uses a 200-horsepower turbocharged 2.0-litre four-cylinder engine, with a six-speed manual or optional six-speed Direct Shift Gearbox (DSG) in Trendline or Comfortline trim. My top-line Silver-Red Edition tester comes only with the DSG, and starts at $44,575.

The DSG, also called a dual-clutch, is probably one of the best developments since transmissions first learned to shift themselves. It contains two gearboxes with clutches between them, one with even-numbered gears, the other with odd-numbered. As soon as you're in first gear, the other side has second gear ready, so the shifts are almost immediate. Once that's done, third gear gets ready, and so on. These transmissions are silky-smooth and all but seamless, along with increased fuel economy.

The retractable roof puts on quite a show when it operates, although it's so complicated that I'd think about an extended warranty for long-term ownership. Unusually, it includes an integrated sunroof, which can be slid open when the top is up.

The roof folds into the trunk, and there's enough space when it's down that you can stow luggage for a weekend trip. The rear seat includes a pass-through for longer items such as skis.

The Eos is great to drive: power comes on smoothly, torque steer is well-managed, handling is accurate and the steering is nicely weighted. Even when the top is down, it feels confidently solid and tight, with no rattles or cowl shake.

Interior materials are good-quality and precisely fitted, with just enough metallic trim to look good but not garish. Big dials and simple controls make it easy to make adjustments with little time spent looking away from the road.

AutoPilot

Michael Goetz

Read this week's column at metronews.ca/autopilot

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Workology

Women's softball at SFU

Simon Fraser University held a sod-turning ceremony yesterday for a playing field for its women's softball team, which has been without a home field since its inception in 1990. The project is being funded by a $500,000 donation from the Keith and Betty Beedie Foundation to SFU Athletics' Bring Our Teams Home campaign. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

A playwright's tale

Writing for the stage can be a hard and lonely business

Backstage Pass

JON TATTRIE
for Metro Canada

The process of getting a play out of the writer's head and onto the stage is a long and winding one. Governor General Award-winning playwright Catherine Banks wrote her first play in 1983. She learned a lot from the process, but it never saw the light of stage; her first performed play came in 1991.

"I started writing that play the week I brought my newborn daughter home from (the hospital) and it was produced the year she entered primary," the Nova Scotian playwright says of The Summer of the Piping Plover. "It felt really wonderful when that play opened because I had learned I could do it."

Playwriting can be a hard, lonely business, with no guarantee your work will ever be performed. Banks' big breakthrough came last year, when Bone Cage won the coveted GG.

"It was validation shot through with joy!" she says.

Getting a play performed can be an arduous process. She had to secure funding from government agencies and sink a lot of her own cash into Bone Cage. By then, Banks was fully committed to the play's darkly humorous story of Jamie and Chicky growing up in rural Nova Scotia.

"Why would any character ever come to me again if I didn't see the characters of Bone Cage all the way to the stage?" she wonders.

Once a company picks up a play, there's the tricky process of turning a playwright's imagination into reality.

"Even when I set out to write a play that will be easily produced, in the course of writing the play it takes me to a place where I have to make a decision: Will I or won't I allow the play to take me where it needs to go?" Banks says. Can theatre companies afford to stage it? Are there too many/too few roles? Are the technical requirements possible?

"Only once have I made a concession to make a play 'more producible;' I reduced the script by one actor. In the end, I had to produce the play myself anyway and now I have a play with a ghost," she laments.

After studying acting at university, Banks honed her skills at local writing workshops. Many institutes such as Dalhousie University offer courses on playwriting as part of theatre programs. UBC offers an MFA in creative writing and theatre (playwriting) and students at Concordia can major in playwriting.

Creating a play demands imagination, deep pockets and a full commitment to the story, playwright Catherine Banks says.

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Workology in brief

THE UPPER HAND A recent Canadian survey by Accountemps reveals that when it comes to applying for jobs in the financial sector, job experience is just as important as having a degree for new graduates. Two hundred and seventy chief financial officers were interviewed across Canada for the survey and the majority rated experience as very important. Their top advice to new graduates is to consider an internship if a full-time position isn't immediately available, trying part-time work, or taking on temporary or freelance work to build up experience.

POSITIVE OUTLOOK The Bank of Canada has just released their Business Outlook survey, and the news is positive. Of the managers interviewed at roughly 100 companies in May and June for the survey, 61 per cent of senior managers predict faster sales growth over the next year. This latest poll reveals a marked shift in sentiment compared with the two previous quarterly surveys where just 30 per cent of managers were optimistic. About 40 per cent of respondents also said they expect to add workers over the next year.

PENSIONS According to Statistics Canada, only 25 per cent of Canada's private sector workers had a workplace pension plan in 2005. As a result, five provincial finance ministers are currently in talks over a proposal to set up a separate national pension system in order to avoid a potential pension crisis.

—HEATHER BUCHAN

Metro Workology exclusive: Backstage Pass
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Stage builders bring theatre ideas to life

Backstage Pass

JON TATTRIE
for Metro Canada

In theatre, set installers are tasked with building dreams. After a playwright creates a world and the set designer decides what it will look like, a team of technicians assembles the stage.

When the curtains open, theatre set builders are working frantically behind the scene to make sure a play runs smoothly.

Dustin Scott Harvey (dustinscottharvey.wordpress.com) builds sets in Halifax when he's not writing his own plays. He studied theatre at Acadia University and did a post- grad in acting at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art in the U.K.

"I am well-schooled in whatever it takes to get a performance up and out to a public," he says. "I got involved in technician work when I found myself back in Nova Scotia looking to pay rent. There are always opportunities to get calls if you are willing to do it. I really wanted to stay within the world of theatre."

Working on stages gives him a deeper understanding of how creative ideas are articulated in theatre. "Each show is like a little life. My personal interest is how theatre is as much as what theatre is," he says.

At the entry level, set building doesn't require a lot of technical qualifications. It helps if you're passionate about theatre and open to new experiences, Harvey says.

"These jobs can be physically and emotionally demanding. That being said, the things that will always help are: Work diligently, show up on time and don't complain. If you just do those three things, you will go far."

Earlier this year he was on the team that built the stage for Neptune Studio Theatre's South African-Canadian collaboration, Ubuntu, which had previously run in Toronto. After building the complex and frequently changing stage, he worked as a backstage technician.

"There were five hours to learn how to run the show," he remembers. "The show had three giant, rotating doors, quick costume changes, prop placements and resets. At one point, I was standing with my back to a wall while one of the 500-pound doors swung inches past my nose. The margins for error were slim."

John Raymond is the BFA Technical Theatre Coordinator at the University of Alberta. Raymond says the program "provides the student with knowledge that they would not easily pick up otherwise."

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Isotopes pitched around by University of Winnipeg

The University of Winnipeg and Acsion Industries, a Manitoba-based provider of electron beam treated products and services, have submitted to the federal government a joint bid expressing interest in becoming medical isotope suppliers. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Workology in **brief**

EI BENEFITS Due to the global economic downturn, more and more Canadians are turning to employment insurance. According to Statistics Canada, the number of Canadians collecting EI benefits rose by 65,600 people from April to May, totaling 778,700 — the highest rate in 12 years.

–HEATHER BUCHAN/ FOR METRO CANADA

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Daniel Lublin

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It's possibly the worst fraud in workplace law — corporations, with expensive lawyers and deeper pockets, requiring their employees to sign one-sided employment contracts that reduce their legal rights. And employees, without bargaining power or an understanding of the law, not realizing their interests have been undermined.

What most people don't understand is that a written employment contract is not a requirement of employment. This is because the law implies a number of essential terms and conditions, such as termination, fair treatment and duration among others, and it does so whether or not they are written down. However, as many of those implied terms are considered too employee-generous, most companies insist that employees sign contracts that reduce those implied rights. Employees then unknowingly agree to be eliminated with minimum notice, demoted, see their salary slashed and prevented from competition following their departure — all with legal impunity.

Don't misunderstand. Employees are not entirely without recourse. The Supreme Court has recognized the unique nature of the employment contract and the inherent power imbalance when negotiating terms. As a result, judges have created various devices to prevent unfairness. If the contract is ambiguous, illegal, provides less than employment standards legislation or is entered into under duress or coercion, it may be set aside.

While these devices provide a level of protection, they still ignore some fundamental truths. First, employees seldom negotiate contracts and if they do, it's rarely on equal footing. Either they fear the job offer will be withdrawn and offered to a competitor or they are simply told the language will not be changed. In today's job market, their fears are not unfounded. Employers, then, usually have their way.

How do these contracts affect workers? In a file my law firm is handling, the employee had been recruited away from a large American technology firm where he worked for eight years, to join a Canadian competitor. Before he began, he signed what he was told was a "standard form" contract. Six months later he was fired.

It was a simple win — or so he thought. He had a strong claim to make his new employer responsible for the severance he was owed from his old job. But the contract he signed specifically prevents him from making that claim and worse, limits his damages to only one week's pay. Although the conclusion to his case will probably be based on other factors that are involved, there is one certainty: Without that contract, his case would be stronger.

FOR THE FULL ARTICLE, VISIT METRONEWS.CA/WORKPLACELAW

Daniel A. Lublin is an employment lawyer focusing on the law of dismissal; dan@canadaemploymentlawyer.com.

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iLounge.com notes that Apple has added a new Travel Guide section to the iTunes storefront under More In Music, (it) offers links to destination applications, podcasts, audiobooks" and lots more. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Travel

Standing room

According to the International Airline Passengers Association (IAPA), "at least two very low-cost carriers are entertaining the idea of transporting passengers in an upright manner — standing up! ... Spring Air, China's self-proclaimed first low-cost carrier is looking for permission from regulators to install 'standing seats' that would cost less than traditional seats... (and Ryanair) is looking to Boeing for a design that would permit stools or railings for passengers to be strapped to." See iapa.com for more details. METRO NEWS SERVICES

TRAVELDESK@METRONEWS.CA

Syria flaunts its hidden treasures

Trove of historical landmarks awaits Western tourists

Iranian pilgrims pray beside Arabs at the 8th century Umayyad Mosque, one of Islam's grandest sites. Down a nearby alley, European tourists watch restoration work at an Ottoman-era palace being converted into a hotel.

"I've not seen such contrast between image and the reality," said German tourist Anna Kopola, looking at Syrian art on display in a gallery in the capital, Damascus. "Syria is portrayed as a centre of terrorism in the West but it's peaceful and modern."

While tourists have long travelled to see Egypt's pyramids, tense ties with the West made Syria a no-go zone for decades.

"Few have heard of the magnificent ruins at Dura Europos, a Greco-Roman city dubbed the Pompeii of the desert, or Krak des Chevaliers, among the world's greatest Crusader castles."

Few have heard of the magnificent ruins at Dura Europos, a Greco-Roman city dubbed the Pompeii of the desert, or Krak des Chevaliers, among the world's greatest Crusader castles.

But a rapprochement with the West — Syria recently invited U.S. President Barack Obama to Damascus for talks — and the gradual liberalization of an economy that long shunned foreign input are helping Syria shed its pariah state image.

"Nicolas Sarkozy's visit last year was a boost," Antoine Mamarbachi, a tour operator said of the French president. "Syria is no longer a persona non grata."

Tourist numbers rose 15 per cent last year and Tourism Minister Saadallah Agha al-Qalaa expects 40,000 new hotel beds to become available in the next three years, up from 48,000 now.

Demand has grown so fast, he said, that Syrian tourism may escape the impact of the global downturn that has hit the sector worldwide. Tourism already accounts for 13 per cent of Syria's gross domestic product and will only become more important as the Arab country's dwindling oil production falls further.

Syria has so far tended to attract visitors from other parts of the Middle East, who are less perturbed by its image and more interested in its beach resorts.

Two-thirds of visitors last year were Arab, but promotional campaigns by the state and tour operators over the last year have targeted high-end Europeans.

As the East-West crossroads of the ancient world, Syria has been a trade hub for centuries, attracting European adventurers from Lawrence of Arabia to Freya Stark.

Read more on page 16 ››

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KHALED AL-HARIRI/REUTERS

Above, the ruins of Palmyra. Below, Western tourists visit the Ottoman-era Takiyah Suleimanieh mosque complex in Damascus.

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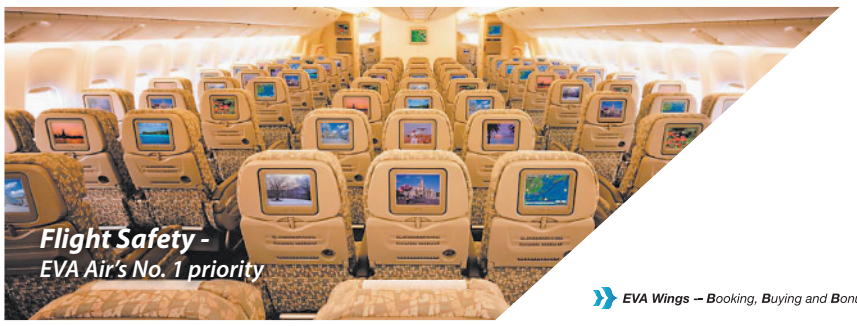

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KHALED AL-HARIRI/REUTERS

G. DAGLI ORTI/DE AGOSTINI PICTURE LIBRARY

Left, a handicraft shop in Old Damascus. Right, Syria's Krak des Chevaliers, a fortress that's among the world's great Crusader castles.

Syria restorations preserve character

>> Continued from page 15

Dura Europos, the ruined walled city above the banks of the Euphrates, produced early examples of Judaic and Christian art. The Umayyad dynasty made Damascus the capital of a Muslim empire that stretched to Spain.

Legend has it that two heads are buried beneath the Ummayad Mosque — those of John the Baptist and Imam Hussein, an early Islamic figure whose killing in 680 AD cemented Shi'ite-Sunni splits.

But Syria's modern history has been dominated by its struggle with Israel and Soviet-style policies since the Baath Party's 1963 coup that reduced it to an economic backwater.

The United States imposed sanctions on Syria in 2004 and the government faces two United Nations investigations, although tensions have eased in recent months and Washington said in June it would appoint an ambassador to Damascus after a four-year hiatus.

"The business environment in Syria is still poorer than its neighbours, but this is a virgin market and the fact that so many investors are coming shows that the risk is worth taking," said Jihad Yazigi, editor of the Syria Report online newsletter.

Only in the past decade has Syria eased restrictions on foreign exchange and banking and allowed companies to transfer profits abroad.

But it remains among the world's hardest places to do business, according to World Economic Forum study.

Courts lack safeguards against political interference and the workforce lacks language skills and training. Yet the risks have not put off investors from the oil-exporting Gulf.

Qatari Diyar, a real estate company owned by the Qatar Investment Authority, is building a $350 million resort on the Mediterranean coast. Kuwait's Kharafi group is building a 361-room hotel in Damascus. Global hotel brands including Movenpick, Kempinski and Holiday Inn also plan developments.

"Syria is a bargain, although it needs to develop its infrastructure," said Kuwaiti businessman Abdul Hameed Dashti.

In the covered souqs of Old Damascus, Western tourists now shop for Syrian kilims and amble from the tomb of the Mamluk ruler Baibars to courtyard houses-turned-boutique hotels.

Gone are the days when a visitor could wander through the ruins of Palmyra, a classical city that rises like a mirage from the eastern desert, without encountering another soul.

"Syria needs to do more preservation. I was in Lebanon and the level of indiscriminate construction made me never want to go back," said Swiss tourist Roland Diethelm, who was having a drink on a hotel terrace overlooking the ruins at Palmyra.

Repeated wars have left scars on Syria's neighbour Lebanon but those tourists who do make the journey often combine it with a short drive to Damascus.

Construction across Syria has been chaotic but investors are taking increasing care to preserve the character of Old Damascus and Aleppo, realizing that this is what many Europeans crave.

Opened a year ago, Beit Zaman hotel is a painstakingly restored 300-year-old courtyard house located on Damascus' Roman-era Straight Street, which is mentioned in the Bible. The hotel now hosts luxury tourists and special events.

"Our customers appreciate the restoration work we have done and the feel of Old Damascus," said Beit Zaman spokeswoman Solar Arissian.

"It took some time, but we are seeing more competition and efforts to promote Syria that are attracting more tourists."

REUTERS

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Bike power in Berlin
Defying Germany's reputation as a car-mad country, cycle commuters in the country's capital comprise a fast-growing crowd of 500,000. The trend is being fuelled by deteriorating rail services, high petrol prices, climate change worries and a desire for exercise. REUTERS

Fewer tourists to Dubai lead to drop in gold sales

Gold jewelry sale volumes in Dubai fell around 40 per cent in July versus a year ago, as the economic downturn and summer heat deterred tourism, retailers said yesterday.

Tourists are a large part of the market for Dubai's tax-free gold, but recession has eaten into disposable incomes and hit the flow of visitors to the emirate, deepening the seasonal downturn in visitors as desert temperatures peak.

"There are no more tourists walking around the souq," said a salesman from ARY Jewellery based in Dubai's old gold souk.

"The situation for us is really bad, our sales are down nearly 40 per cent. The heat and the fact that tourists have no money to travel are affecting the business and there are no indications of an improvement."

Almost eight million tourists visited the emirate, which brands itself as the City of Gold, last year. There were no official figures on the number of visitors so far this year, but hotel revenues in the emirate fell 40 per cent on the year in May and June, according to a report issued by hospitality consultancy STR Global. REUTERS

Top cities to visit with children

Many cities can be overwhelming for young travellers, but some are as much fun for the kids as the grown-ups. Lonely Planet's Travel With Children guide lists the world's best cities to visit with children.

1 **Oaxaca, Mexico:** This colourful Mexican city is pint-sized, charming and fun to explore on foot. A central plaza provides plenty of run-around space for kids and there's a vibrant market; visitmexico.com.

2 **Istanbul:** With its mosques, palaces, museums, bazaars, multicoloured carpets, food markets, Bosphorus cruises and sweet apple tea, children will be fascinated and enchanted at every turn; tourismturkey.org.

3 **London:** You could stay in London for a whole year and find interesting things to do with the children every day. In summer don't miss out on playing in the fountains at Somerset House; visitlondon.com.

4 **Los Angeles:** A good destination for teenagers — choose between the original Disneyland, Universal Studios and Santa Monica. There's heaps to see and do in this sprawling city that encapsulates the American Dream; discoverlosangeles.com.

5 **Vancouver:** Vancouver is frequently named the most liveable city in the world. There's lots of water as well as beaches, a huge urban park (Stanley Park) and numerous hiking and biking trails. In addition, all the attractions of the Rocky Mountains are near by; vancouver.ca/visitors.htm.

6 **Lisbon:** With trams trundling up to a castle, a state-of-the-art aquarium and a fascinating museum that explores Portugal's great seafaring past, this city captivates kids. The fairy-tale town of Sintra, too, is a just a short train ride away; see lisbon-guide.info.

7 **Copenhagen:** Oozes old-world charm, with a compact city centre, a lively waterfront and pedestrian-only zones. Thrilling rides at Tivoli Gardens and Bakken, a royal palace and museums designed especially for children will keep you busy; visitcopenhagen.com. REUTERS

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[1]To redeem TD Points for travel purchases charged to your Card that are not booked through the TD *Visa* Travel Rewards Centre (the "Centre"), Cardholder must contact the Centre after the travel purchase has been posted to the Account and within 90 days from the transaction date of the travel purchase. The required TD Points will be redeemed from the TD Points balance available on the date TD Points are redeemed through the Centre towards the travel purchase, not the transaction date of the travel purchase. The amount that will be credited towards the travel purchase will be equal to the value of the TD Points redeemed. If there are insufficient TD Points available to cover the entire amount of the travel purchase, the Account will only be credited by the value of the TD Points redeemed. Any amount of the travel purchase not covered by the TD Points redeemed will remain on the Account for payment. TD Points must be redeemed in 10,000-point increments. [2]Applies to Cardholders only. [3]Bonus TD Points will be awarded to the new TD First Class Travel *Visa Infinite* Account upon approval. Offer applies to new Accounts only. Offer may be changed, extended or withdrawn at any time without notice. Cannot be combined with any other offer. *Trade-mark of The Toronto-Dominion Bank.

Jackman joins Barnum musical
Hugh Jackman will unleash his singing skills on screen for a musical focused on legendary showman P.T. Barnum. Jenny Bicks is writing the script for Fox. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Entertainment

The Brit Awards
Britney Spears has done it again. The singer has been nominated for seven MTV Video Music Awards. Last year, the pop princess took home three Moon Man trophies for Piece of Me. EONLINE.COM

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

Filmmakers toying around

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada

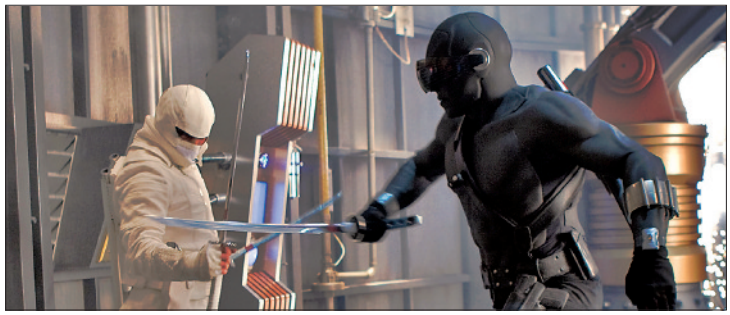
If Hollywood gets its way this weekend, we will all soon be going to theatres to take in thrillers about Stretch Armstrong, He-Man and even the popular board game Monopoly.

That's because this Friday's theatrical release of G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra will firmly establish the latest trend in filmmaking — movies based on popular toys.

Of course, it's not a completely novel idea. Even before Transformers: Revenge of the Fallen racked up over $380 million (and counting) this summer, there had been earlier proverbial dips of the toe in the toy genre. But why have retro-toy movies become so popular?

"It's an escape from economic issues, woes and stress," said Transformers star Megan Fox recently. "People need to get away from reality and I think watching a movie about toys is a good way to numb your brain to things you don't want to be dealing with in life."

That nostalgic flight may be influential but there's also an entirely more strategic game working behind the scenes. With two major toy companies (Hasbro, Mattel) now aggressively paired with Hollywood's top talent agencies, it seems the toymakers are cross-pollinating their product with the cinema directly.



G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra, which is based on the popular toy line, opens in theatres this Friday.

In fact, Hasbro (both Transformers and G.I. Joe) has set up a six-year deal with Universal Pictures to obtain more authority on their toys' image.

"I think what we're seeing in the world at large is the power of brands distinguishing themselves," Universal Pictures Chairman Marc Shmuger recently told The Business Insider. "As we're gripped with fear and anxiety, we look for something we can rely on and trust … so the value of brands has changed, (and with it) what the owners of the brands want to accomplish changes too."

Movie feature

In addition to the aforementioned toys being turned into movies, other products in film development include board games like Battleship (with Hancock director Peter Berg attached) and Candy Land (written by Tropic Thunder's Etan Cohen).

As well, expect future movies about Hot Wheels, Masters of the Universe and even 1960s-era action figure Major Matt Mason — which is linked to none other than Tom Hanks. And when you've pervaded the influence of such A-list actors as Hanks, you know you've made it in Hollywood.

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Imodium metro

After Funny People, Judd Apatow down but not out

In the wake of the middling $22.6 million US opening for Judd Apatow's latest film Funny People, Hollywood eagerly declared the prolific filmmaker's stock was still very high.

Managers, agents and development executives interviewed this week said Apatow's minor misstep at the box office as well as some industry grumbling about the picture's 146-minute length and tone weren't likely to affect his standing with studios.

"This is someone who still makes movies at a pretty low cost, works with amazing talent and has the box office track record to back him up," one talent rep said.

People underperformed compared to Apatow's last picture, Knocked Up, which opened to $30.7 million on the way to a $149 million domestic total. Although it outgrossed the $21.4 million opening of Apatow's first directorial effort, The 40-Year-Old Virgin, People is not expected to show the leggy holding power that ultimately boosted Virgin to $109.4 million at the domestic box office.

GETTY IMAGES

Judd Apatow

Still, the new Universal release nonetheless earned about one-third of its estimated $75 million budget, and it could break even when all is said and done.

Many also were willing to give Apatow a pass because he tried something off-brand by tackling more serious themes: Adam Sandler stars as a comedian diagnosed with a fatal disease. They said that Universal, which last week signed him to a three-picture directing deal, made the right move to lock up Apatow despite the shaky advance buzz for People.

REUTERS

Deals could add millions to Jackson estate

PEOPLE An attorney for the executors of Michael Jackson's estate said yesterday that deals worked out in partnership with the King of Pop's concert promoter could provide millions of dollars to his estate.

Since his death in June, numerous reports have speculated that concert promoter AEG Live and the executors of Jackson's estate were working on arrangements to make videos, DVDs and other merchandise based on the Thriller singer's planned comeback.

Attorney Howard Weitzman, who represents Jackson's longtime lawyer John Branca and music industry executive John McClain, the two executors of Jackson's will, said after a court hearing Monday that Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Mitchell Beckloff, who is overseeing matters related to the estate, will likely approve business agreements at an Aug. 10 hearing. REUTERS

Mary Lynn married
24 star Mary Lynn Rajskub and personal trainer Matthew Rolph got married this weekend. The couple wed in a Las Vegas ceremony at the Planet Hollywood Resort & Casino, People reports. **POPEATER.COM**

With friends like these ...

Paris Hilton doesn't need a televised competition to find friends, but she says she uses one to give people a chance to be her pal who wouldn't have a shot otherwise.

"Obviously, in real life, I have a lot of friends," she says with a proud giggle. "The show is just a really funny and fun concept."

The bleached-blonde member of the family behind the Hilton Hotels Corporation will name her newest confidante on the finale of Paris Hilton's My New BFF (that's "best friend forever," for the acronym-inept), this week. The show airs Thursday night on MuchMusic.

The competition is the second she's held in the United States, although things went sour with the first American victor. After visiting the hometowns of this season's three finalists on last week's episode, Hilton ousted California's Stephen Hampton, the sole remaining male.

Paris Hilton will name her new BFF this week.

Now, the final two pets of Paris — Florida's Stefanie Fritz and Louisiana's Tiniecia Goldsmith — are left to vie for the BFF title, having outlasted 14 others in hopes of hobnobbing regularly with the heiress.

Whoever wins, Hilton says it's very important she doesn't change who she is when the shimmer of celebrity spills onto them.

"When you come in the spotlight, anything can happen," she says. "You should never forget who you first were originally."

Among the qualities Hilton said she looks for in a BFF are trustworthiness, a good heart and the ability to humour her.

"I just want somebody who is real and not becoming my friend for any other reasons, to get face time or use me," she says.

And to make sure that doesn't happen? "Maybe I'll tell them a secret ... we'll see if it will get out, even if it's a big rumour," she says.

But even if it doesn't work out again, perhaps Hilton will keep one of the other contenders in mind. She says that even after the show wrapped shooting, she still socialized with half the cast.

"They came over to my house party," she says. "Everyone this season has just been so much fun. There are so many big personalities in the house. But the person who won, I'm very close to."

On TV

- If you missed season two of Paris Hilton's My New BFF, you can experience it in its entirety Saturday on Star.

Jon & Kate return to air post-split

HIATUS A U.S. reality television show about a family with eight children was back on air on Monday — despite the parents splitting up.

The show Jon & Kate Plus 8, aired by cable channel TLC, resumed after a six-week hiatus spawned by the break-up of parents Jon and Kate Gosselin which sent ratings soaring.

As the series resumed its fifth season, the parents now living apart and taking turns looking after their 5-year-old sextuplets and twin girls. Despite the split, the pair decided their lives and the lives of their children would continue to be led in the spotlight.

REUTERS

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ABC on verge of rom-com series

SERIES ABC and Alyssa Milano will be Romantically Challenged this midseason. The network is close to ordering 13 episodes of the comedy centering on a thirtysomething man who is torn between his new girlfriend and needy best friend. The pilot was a serious contender for a berth on ABC's fall schedule.

Pair of actresses score TV parts

ROLES Two veteran actresses have booked new TV gigs. Swoosie Kurtz has joined the Lifetime comedy series Rita Rocks in a recurring role, and Brenda Vaccaro has been added to the lineup of You Don't Know Jack, HBO Films' biopic of Jack Kevorkian.

REUTERS

Kenya's Style

Kenya Hunt
Read the blog at metronews.ca/kenyasstyle

For complete online movie listings, trailers, reviews and tickets, visit: metronews.ca/movies

VA	Vu	SC	C	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime 8/5/09	251	308	3 CBC	Coronation St.	Jeopardy!	Dragon's Den (CC)		The Tudors (CC) (DVS)		CBC News: The National (N)		(:05) The Hour
	255	358	6 JOY	E! News (N)	The Insider	Psych (N) (CC)		Kendra (N)	Kendra (N)	Women	Women	News
	254	-	8 M	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Omni News: Mandarin Edition		News: Cantonese Edition		Omni News: Punjabi Edition		Metropia
	250	321	9 CTV	Corner Gas	Hollywood	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		So You Think You Can Dance		CSI: NY "Point of No Return"		News
	-	-	10 OMNI	The Daily	Frasier (CC)	Stargate SG-1 (CC)		Third Watch (CC)		Scrubs (CC)	Discovering	New Day
	252	336	11 GTV	Entertainment	ET Canada	Wipeout (N) (CC)		(:02) In Plain Sight (CC)		The Philanthropist "Kashmir"		News
	256	389	12 VI	The Road to Avonlea		Old Christine	Gary Unmarr	America's Got Talent (CC)		Monk Monk develops a crush.		News (N)
	253	359	13 CITY	Law & Order: SVU		Goode Family	Surviving Sub.	I Survived a Japanese Game Show (Season Finale) (N) (CC)				The CityNews
	-	-	14 CW	Deal-No Deal	Deal-No Deal	America's Next Top Model		America's Next Top Model		Seinfeld	Seinfeld	Frasier (CC)
	289	381	15 CBS	Entertainment	The Insider	Old Christine	Gary Unmarr	Criminal Minds (CC)		CSI: NY "Point of No Return"		News
	287	379	16 NBC	Evening Mag.	Inside Edition	TV's 50 Funniest Phrases		America's Got Talent (CC)		The Philanthropist "Kashmir"		KING 5 News
	602	568	19 W	Style by Jury	Friends (CC)	Grocery Bag	Grocery	Love It or List It		Wicked Minds (2002) Angie Everhart.		
	288	380	21 ABC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy!	Wipeout (N) (CC)		(:02) I Survived a Japanese Game Show (Season Finale) (N)				KOMO 4 News
	-	-	22 KVOS	M*A*S*H	Seinfeld	Bowfinger ★★★ (1999) Steve Martin, Eddie Murphy.				King	Still Standing	Scrubs (CC)
	291	383	27 PBS	Steves Europe	West Coast	Time Team America (N) (CC)		The Lost Pyramids of Caral		The Clinton 12 (CC)		SR Vaughan
	290	382	23 FOX	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	So You Think You Can Dance		So You Think You Can Dance		Q13 FOX News at Ten (N)		Family Guy
	-	364	26 PBS	Green Builders (CC)		Keeping Up	Being Served	Tavis Smiley	Charlie Rose (N) (CC)		Time Team America (CC)	
	296	654	24 SBK	Frasier (CC)	Frasier (CC)	Punk'd (CC)	South Park	Cheers (CC)	Half & Half	Work Home	Family Court	Paid Program
	298	653	25 TLA	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	America's Next Top Model		America's Next Top Model		KTLA Prime News (CC)		Friends (CC)
	295	651	33 WGN	WGN News at Nine (N) (CC)		Family Guy	Two/Half Men	According-Jim	Sex and-City	Friends (CC)	Friends (CC)	My Wife-Kids
	297	652	37 WPX	PIX News at Ten Tong. (N)		Two/Half Men	Friends (CC)	Sex and-City	According-Jim	Frasier (CC)	Frasier (CC)	Odd Couple
	199	311	66 STR	News	NTV Latenight News		Late Show-Letterman		Late Late Show		Will & Grace	Seinfeld
news	502	390	63 NW	The Ugly Truth About Beauty		CBC News: The National (N)		CBC News: The National		The Ugly Truth About Beauty		National
	500	500	68 CNN	Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)				Larry King Live		Anderson Cooper 360 (CC)		Cooper 360
sports	407	419	62 RSP	PartyPoker.net		UFC: Access	MMA Conn	Countdown to UFC 101		Sportsnet Connected (Live)		Sportsnet
	400	400	60 TSN	SportsCentre (Live) (CC)			Off the Record	2009 World Series of Poker		2009 World Series of Poker		SportsCentre
	411	457	49 OLN	Ghost Hunters (CC)		Dog the Bounty Hunter (CC)		Survivorman (CC)		Ghost Hunters (CC)		Bounty Hunter
	410	403	24 SCR	Score Tonight		Final Score	Final Score	Final Score	Final Score	Final Score	Final Score	Final Score
	417	406	65 SC	Wrecked	Wrecked	Pimp My Ride	Pass Time	Thunder	Pinks Out	Pass Time (N)	Pass Time (N)	Wrecked
	416	409	144 GLF	Foot Brazil		Toronto	Gol TV News	MLS Weekly	Toronto	Paid Program	Gol TV News	Gol TV News
family	552	543	29 YTV	In Real Life "The Circus"		Malcolm-Mid.	Futurama	Survive This	Adrenaline	Falcon Beach "Turn Card"		Mystery Hnt.
	555	545	50 TEL	Jimmy Two	Total Drama	6TEEN	6TEEN	Futurama	American Dad	Chicken	Father	Moral Orel
	557	541	51 FAM	Wizards-Place	Han. Montana	Zack & Cody	Latest Buzz	Wizards-Place	Life Derek	Ned's School	Cory in House	Zack & Cody
	553	546	55 TRE	Comfy Couch	Big & Small	Max & Ruby	Babar (CC)	Backyard	Ni Hao	Go, Diego, Go!	Franklin	Comfy Couch
cable variety	268	354	5 KNO	Eyewitness to War		Himalaya With Michael Palin		The Planets (CC)		Yo-Yo Ma: Inspired by Bach		Hockey
	575	583	20 CMT	Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith	Canyon	CMT 4 Tracks	Home Imp.	Home Imp.	Reba "As Is"	Reba (CC)	Hope & Faith
	570	580	42 MM	Video on Trial	Video on Trial	One Tree Hill (CC)		Making His Band		Video on Trial	Video on Trial	Spotlight
	600	564	43 H&G	House	House	Holmes	Holmes	Hid Potential	Property	City	The Stagers	House
	615	520	61 A&E	Dog the Bounty Hunter (CC)		Criss Angel Mindfreak (CC)		Dog the Bounty Hunter (CC)		Dog the Bounty Hunter (CC)		Bounty Hunter
	628	584	82 SPKE	Ultimate Fighting Championship 95: Sanchez vs. Stevenson				CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		Spike's Most Amazing Videos		Disorderly
	521	560	34 TLC	Toddlers & Tiaras (N) (CC)		Cake Boss	Cake Boss	I Didn't Know	I Didn't Know	Toddlers & Tiaras (CC)		Ultimate Cake
	616	522	93 SHO	The Outer Limits "Haven"		The Guard (CC)		Destination: Infestation (2007) Antonio Sabato Jr. (CC)				House (CC)
	620	523	70 BVO	Borradaile's Century (CC)		Law & Order (CC)		Without a Trace (CC)		The War Zone ★★★★ (1999) Ray Winstone.		
	601	562	41 SLC	End of Leash	End of Leash	ET Canada	Til Debt-Part	Real Housewives OC		Trading Spouses		Biggest Loser
	520	505	42 DIS	Mayday "Fanning the Flames"		Daily Planet (CC)		Day of the Shark 2		Mighty Ships "Mv Fairplayer"		Deadliest
	522	506	44 HIS	NCIS "Grace Period" (CC)		Cities of the Underworld		Ice Road Truckers (CC)		NCIS "Grace Period" (CC)		Sea Hunters
	627	528	45 SPC	Stormworld	Stormworld	Stargate SG-1 "Beachhead"		Star Trek: Next Gener.		Star Trek: Voyager (CC)		Star Trek: Ent.
	294	650	47 TBS	House-Payne	House-Payne	House-Payne	House-Payne	Sex and-City	Sex and-City	Blue Streak ★ (1999) (PA) Martin Lawrence.		
	619	525	48 TROP	The Crow: Stairway to Heaven		What	What	Are You Smarter		Family Guy	Seinfeld	Seinfeld
	603	561	69 FN	The Next Food Network Star		Opening Soon	Opening Soon	Unwrapped	Unwrapped	Diner, Drive-In	Diner, Drive-In	Next Star
	626	547	57 COM	Air Farce	22 Minutes	22 Minutes	Corner Gas	The Simpsons	South Park	Jon Dore	Tosh.0 (N)	Daily Show
	320	621	30 CEN	(6:30) Out of Control (2009)		Private Valentine: Blonde & Dangerous (2008)		(:45) Hamlet 2 ★★ (2008, Comedy) Steve Coogan. (CC)				
	581	566	101 MTV	The Real World "Cancun" (N)		MTV Live	After	16 and Pregnant "Amber"		The Real World "Cancun"		MTV Live
	261	394	102 V	Recreat. Eden	Prenup	Poltergeist: The Legacy		Jonestown: The Life and Death of Peoples Temple ★★★				Paid Program
	-	-	105 MUL	Banquet	Kingdom-Wind	Van. Nights	Iranian Pop	Sabor Latino		Sabor Musical	Travel TV	Patrol World

critics'corner

The Philanthropist
Rhada Shivpuri (guest star Sarita Choudhury), one of Teddy and Philip's (James Purefoy, Jesse L. Martin) college friends, asks for help negotiating with the Indian and Pakistani governments in an effort to rebuild the water system in the Kashmir region. Philip and Dax (Michael Kenneth Williams) must lead a desperate manhunt after Teddy goes missing in a war-torn sector. Neve Campbell also stars in the new episode "Kashmir." 4 PM on STR

The Next Food Network Star
In "Miami Up All Night," the remaining four finalists prepare to head to Miami for their next challenge, but first they must create a dish for one of OTG Management's restaurants at JetBlue's Terminal 5 at JFK Airport in New York. The finalists then go to Miami to cater a swanky party at the fabulous Nikki Beach nightclub. 7 PM on FN

Douglas son's drug charge

Michael Douglas' son Cameron Douglas has been arrested in New York on a drug charge, according to media reports. Douglas, 30, was arrested at the Hotel Gansevoort in Manhattan and faces a methamphetamine-dealing charge. PEOPLE.COM

Celebrity Buzz

Mischa gets off to a rough start

STUMBLING BLOCKS Mischa Barton's return to her social life hasn't been going too smoothly, according to Page Six.

A source spotted the actress out Saturday night in NYC's West Village where Barton was "having a disastrous dinner" with a group of girls.

"She was upset and talking frantically into her phone about having a stalker," the source said. "Her friends were trying to console her, but she went outside and chain-smoked cigarettes."

The next night, Barton attended a party where someone spilled a drink on her dress.

METRO WORLD NEWS

GETTY IMAGES

Hilton mom remembers Michael

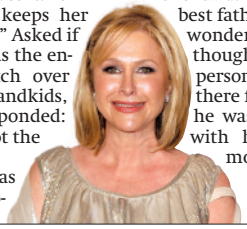
NOSTALGIA Kathy Hilton, Paris' mom, was devastated by the recent loss of her lifelong "special friend" Michael Jackson, people.com reports.

"I have never lost anybody that I went to school with that I was close to in a friendship (that lasted) all these years," she told People.

Hilton believes that the late singer's mother Katherine will be a positive guardian for the kids.

"I adore Mrs. Jackson. Katherine is the rock," said Hilton. "It is like Camp Jackson, all of those kids. All the aunts, the uncles, the children come there. She plays Scrabble with them. She loves it. I think that's what keeps her really young." Asked if Katherine has the energy to watch over her three grandkids, Hilton responded: "Oh, she's got the energy."

Hilton has fond memories of Jackson: "He was so much more normal than people know. He really was. He loved to giggle and have fun. I spent time with him, had dinners," she said. "He was the best father ... He was a wonderful, kind, thoughtful, caring person. He would be there for people and he was so generous with his time and money."



METRO NEWS SERVICES

Details on Jude's fling emerge

THE NITTY-GRITTY More details are emerging about how Jude Law first met Samantha Burke, the American model who is pregnant with the actor's fourth child.

The pair met in January outside a New York nightclub after it closed at 4 a.m., according to the Sun, when Law took Burke to a nearby diner before retiring to his hotel room.

Sources say the affair lasted barely a week. Pals of Burke insist she was no party animal before meeting Law.

"She's actually innocent and inexperienced when it comes to men," a high school friend told the newspaper.

METRO WORLD NEWS

'I'm not, but if I was...'

FANNING THE FLAMES If Gerard Butler was dating Jennifer Aniston, he'd says he'd be the first to admit it, people.com reports.

"If I was, I would say I was," the actor told British TV show GMTV. Butler, 39, has been repeatedly linked to Aniston, 40, with whom he's currently filming The Bounty.

But even though the two look cozy in photos, he says there is nothing to it. "It's just that if you're not married in Hollywood and you're working with somebody else who's single, you're having a thing with her."

But to add fuel to the fire, Butler says he's looking forward to sharing some kisses with her on set. "I'm excited ... I'm lucky — yeah, I know."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Nick ticks off the tax man

WRONG SIDE OF THE LAW Nicolas Cage has reportedly run afoul of the tax man to the tune of $6.3 million US, which might explain why a number of his homes, including spots in New Orleans and Hollywood, are on the market, according to the Daily Mail.

The IRS has filed court papers seeking millions from Cage for the 2007 fiscal year, when he starred in four films, including National Treasure: Book of Secrets and Ghost Rider. Cage settled another tax dispute last year by paying nearly $1 million to the IRS.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Mom pulls bid to control MJ estate

LEGAL Now that she's been granted custody of her grandchildren, Katherine Jackson has withdrawn her petition to be put in charge of Michael Jackson's $500 million estate, according to Hollyscoop. Debbie Rowe, biological mother of the older two, will still have visitation rights.

METRO WORLD NEWS

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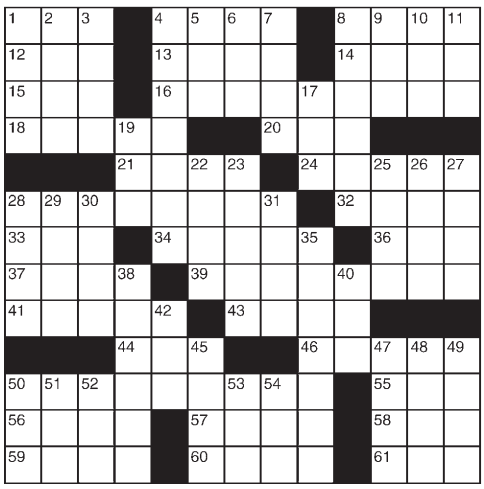
Take Five



Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

	8		9					
6	9					8		1
		4		5				9
4		2		3	1			
	3						1	
			2	8		4		6
1				4		7		
9		7					5	2
					6		8	

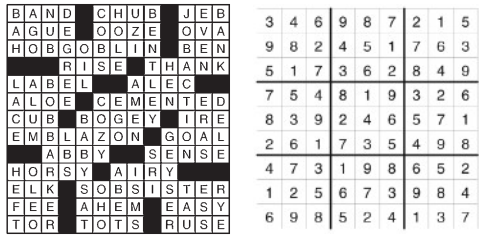
ACROSS

1 Request
4 MacDonald's place
8 Woman of the knight
12 Skedaddle
13 Curved molding
14 Bloodhound's clue
15 Lemieux milieu
16 Ruthless, as a competition
18 Winning
20 Twitch
21 Honey bunch?
24 PAC's concern
28 Likely loser
32 Swampy terrain
33 "A pox upon thee!"
34 Above, to an editor
36 Predetermine
37 Watch wolfishly
39 Carnival goer's lunch, maybe
41 Bookcase component
43 "Wheel of Fortune" option
44 Commotion
46 Legerdemain
50 Basic swimming stroke
55 Praise in verse
56 Rainbow
57 Slay
58 Antiquated
59 Kelly or Siskel
60 Calendar abbr.
61 Turn blue?

DOWN

1 Met melody
2 Similar things
3 Elbow counterpart
4 Animals' entrees
5 In olden times
6 Rule, for short
7 Encounter
8 E-business
9 Toss into the mix
10 Cattle call
11 Work unit
17 Have a bug
19 Honest politician
22 Learning (Abbr.)
23 Future juniors
25 Shuttlecock
26 Vivacity, to the maestro
27 Safecracker
28 Fleet from far away?
29 Approaching
30 Takeout order?
31 Clench
35 Food
38 Pass by
40 — jiffy
42 Medicine approval org.
45 Probability
47 Suitable
48 Without acting
49 Relinquish
50 Use a shovel
51 Raw rock
52 Card-player's call
53 Fawn's mama
54 Back talk

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:



3	4	6	9	8	7	2	1	5
9	8	2	4	5	1	7	6	3
5	1	7	3	6	2	8	4	9
7	5	4	8	1	9	3	2	6
8	3	9	2	4	6	5	7	1
2	6	1	7	3	5	4	9	8
4	7	3	1	9	8	6	5	2
1	2	5	6	7	3	9	8	4
6	9	8	5	2	4	1	3	7

On the web

For more games and 60 additional daily cartoon strips, visit metronews.ca

Metro Recipe of the Day

Two-cheese Soufflé

INGREDIENTS:

5 large eggs
3/4 cup (175 ml) 1% milk
2 tbsp (25 ml) all-purpose flour
1/4 tsp (1 ml) salt
Several dashes hot red pepper sauce
1/3 cup (75 ml) shredded Colby cheese
1/3 cup (75 ml) shredded Swiss cheese

METHOD:

1. Separate eggs. Discard 2 yolks. Place egg whites in medium bowl. Place egg yolks in small bowl. Set aside.
2. Preheat oven to 325 F(160 C). Make foil collar and attach to 1-1/2-qt (1.5-l) soufflé dish. Lightly grease foil collar and soufflé dish. In small pot, whisk milk, flour, salt and red pepper sauce. Cook over moderate heat, stirring constantly, until mixture starts to thicken. Cook and stir 2 minutes more, until thickened and bubbly. Add cheese and stir until melted. Remove from heat.
3. Whisk egg yolks until light. Add some hot cheese mixture to yolks, then slowly whisk all of yolk mixture into cheese mixture.
4 . With electric mixer on high, beat egg whites until soft peaks form. Stir one-fourth of whites into hot cheese mixture, then quickly fold in remaining whites. Spoon into prepared soufflé dish. Make top hat. Bake 45 minutes or until puffy and golden. Serve immediately.

SERVES 4

rd.ca

For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to **rd.ca** or check out **Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!**

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton sallybrompton.com

For Sally's expanded daily and weekend horoscopes, visit metronews.ca

ARIES ♈
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
There really is no limit to what you can accomplish, though your efforts are more likely to bring success if you focus on what is important.

TAURUS ♉
APRIL 21-MAY 21
Someone you are close to will be emotionally demanding, but if you put yourself out for them now it will save you a lot of problems later on.

GEMINI ♊
MAY 22-JUNE 21
What you do with your life is limited only by the boundaries you allow your mind to impose on your actions. There are no limits. All things are possible.

CANCER ♋
JUNE 22-JULY 22
The Sun in the most worldly area of your chart makes this a good time to look at what you own and earn. Try something different.

LEO ♌
JULY 23-AUG 23
This is one of the best times of the year for getting things done, both in your personal life and in your work, so don't hold back.

VIRGO ♍
AUG 24-SEPT 22
The Sun's transit of the most sensitive sector of your chart means you won't be able to fool either yourself or other people.

LIBRA ♎
SEPT 23-OCT 23
Don't waste time dreaming and scheming of ways to turn back the clock. You know it can't be done.

SCORPIO ♏
OCT 24-NOV 22
You are not the type to keep your opinions to yourself but be aware that if you deliberately antagonize someone today, they will hit back at you later.

SAGITTARIUS ♐
NOV 23-DEC 21
If you feel like packing your bags and heading off into the wide blue yonder by all means do so. Don't hesitate for even a second.

CAPRICORN ♑
DEC 22-JAN 20
Life moves in cycles and the cycle you are experiencing seems like you are taking too many backward steps.

AQUARIUS ♒
JAN 21-FEB 18
You tend to see the world in terms of black and white, but at some point today you will realize that too narrow a viewpoint can be self-defeating.

PISCES ♓
FEB 19-MARCH 20
Assess your priorities and decide what is worth devoting your time and energy to and what can and must be ignored. Aim for quality work.

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